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PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Public information activities in the field of human rights including the World Public Information Campaign on Human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

GE.01-10437 (E)

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Introduction

1. In its resolution 1999/60, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, at its fifty-seventh session, a report on public information activities, with special emphasis on the activities relating to the World Public Information Campaign.

2. The World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights was launched by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/128 of 8 December 1988, with the objectives of increasing understanding and awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms and educating the public on the international machinery available for the promotion and protection of those rights and freedoms and the efforts of the United Nations to realize them.

3. The coordination of the United Nations education and public information programmes in the field of human rights was specifically mentioned in General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, as part of the mandate of the post of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has repeatedly stressed the importance she attaches to the implementation of activities for increasing the awareness of human rights among the general public.

4. The budget for the 2000-2001 biennium for external printing publications and for the upgrading of the Internet site is US$ 187,600. The publications programme of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is being restructured to respond to the increasing need for human rights information.

5. The present report supplements information and estimates provided in the Secretary-General's last report to the General Assembly (A/54/399). In addition, a report on the latest developments within the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) is available to the Commission (A/55/360).

I. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

A. Publications programme

6. In its resolution 1999/60, the Commission on Human Rights urged OHCHR, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, to cooperate closely in the realization of multimedia information programmes in the field of human rights.

7. In keeping with that directive, and in response to an urgent need to strengthen its publications programme, OHCHR commissioned an external review, which was carried out by a consultant in June and July 2000. Based on the recommendations made in the final report of the review, OHCHR decided to initiate a substantive revision of the programme.

8. The new publications programme will focus on basic publications such as fact sheets, key documents, training and education materials, issue papers and promotional materials with improved quality and multi-language availability. It will be developed and managed in parallel with the OHCHR Web site as a part of a comprehensive public information strategy.

9. Since the last report (E/CN.4/1999/86), OHCHR has continued to receive requests for human rights publications. According to a rough estimate, during the reporting period the Office has distributed more than 65,000 copies of human rights publications, in addition to the 3,500 copies of each publication which are distributed by the Distribution Section at the United Nations Office at Geneva through the mailing list established by OHCHR.

1. Fact Sheet Series

10. The Fact Sheet Series consists of booklets directed at a non-specialized audience, addressing various aspects of United Nations activities in the field of human rights. Fact Sheets are published in the six official languages of the United Nations and distributed worldwide free of charge.

11. OHCHR has put all the Fact Sheets on its Internet Web site, thereby enhancing their dissemination and contributing to a reduction in print runs and a rationalization of expenses.

12. In the reporting period, Fact Sheet No. 26, *The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention*, was published in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Fact Sheet No. 27, *Human Rights Defenders* is being edited.

2. Professional Training Series

13. An important teaching and educational tool is the Professional Training Series, designed primarily to provide support to the training activities of the programme of advisory services and technical assistance of OHCHR, as well as to assist other organizations involved in human rights education for professional groups.

14. During the period under review, No. 6 of the Series, *Human Rights Training: a Manual on Human Rights Training Methodology* was published in English, French and Russian. In collaboration with the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, the volume *Human Rights - A Basic Handbook for UN Staff* was published in English, *hors serie*.

3. Human Rights Study Series

15. Since the last report to the Commission on Human Rights, and following the recommendations in the report by the Joint Inspection Unit (A/51/946 and Corr.1) entitled "United Nations Publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates" and the comments by the Secretary-General thereon (A/52/685) the OHCHR ad hoc Publications Board decided to discontinue the Human Rights Study Series, the content of which is already available in the form of United Nations documents.

4. 1998: Fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights basic information kits

16. The series of basic information kits was conceived as working tools for agencies, programmes, non-governmental organizations and national institutions, as well as individuals, in the framework of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

5. United Nations Decades

17. In the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education the booklet *The Right to Human Rights Education*, No. 3 of the series, was published in English. A revision of *ABC - Teaching Human Rights: Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools* is in preparation. This booklet, previously issued as an ad hoc publication, will be included in the series.

6. Reference material

18. The reference publications of OHCHR, which are United Nations sales publications, are directed at a more specialized audience.

7. Periodicals

19. Since the last report to the General Assembly, issue No. 5 (Winter 1999) and issue No. 6 (Spring 2000) of the OHCHR magazine, entitled *Human Rights*, have been issued. The articles, written in English, French and Spanish, cover the various aspects of the work of the Office. The quarterly is printed in 13,000 copies and distributed throughout the world free of charge. Following a recommendation of the final report of the external review of the OHCHR publications programme, the publication of the quarterly review has been temporarily discontinued, but with the possibility of relaunching it in the future.

8. Ad hoc publications

20. Ad hoc publications consist mainly of reports and proceedings of conferences, workshops and other events held under the auspices of OHCHR.

21. During the reporting period, the volume *Business and Human Rights: A Progress Report* was published in English. The publication takes stock of the progress made by the business community in giving effect to the human rights principles of the Global Compact.

9. Promotional materials

22. OHCHR, in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Public Information, prepared flyers and brochures on the World Conference against Racism (see section D on the World Conference).

10. Media liaison

23. The Office has continued to strengthen its capacity to communicate the human rights message. OHCHR staff responsible for media liaison brief the international press regularly on the activities of the Office and on the human rights programme in general. The media liaison staff is also responsible for, among other duties, drafting press statements on behalf of the Office or the High Commissioner; organizing interviews and media appearances by the High Commissioner; assisting the special procedures mechanisms and the treaty bodies with their media liaison needs, and the drafting and placing of opinion pieces and other articles in major international publications.

B. Use of electronic means

24. During the reporting period significant achievements have been made in the posting of documents and other information on the OHCHR Web site as well as internal information systems. Since the launch of the Web site on 10 December 1996 (www.unhchr.ch), the average use of the site has increased from 1,000 to 30,000 user sessions a week and 3 million documents accessed per month. In order to respond to the rising demand, OHCHR has replaced its server, redesigned the home page and menus and provided live audio and recording of several meetings.

25. Four databases are now fully operational: (a) the treaty bodies database, with a total of almost 20,000 records and full-text documents available for public access; (b) the Charter-based bodies database, containing 19,300 human rights documents issued since 1994 by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; (c) the press database, containing, inter alia, all human rights press releases issued by the Department of Public Information; and (d) the statements database, providing access to public statements delivered by major United Nations human rights officials, as well as governmental representatives.

26. The six-week session of the Commission on Human Rights in 2000 was broadcast live on the World Wide Web.

27. Since the beginning of 2000, the OHCHR Web site has hosted a subsite that provides information relating to next year's World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

C. External relations programme

1. Briefings

28. OHCHR regularly organizes for students, diplomats, journalists, public officials, academics, professors and non-governmental organizations. It also provides lecturers for briefings organized by the Department of Public Information. One hundred and sixty such briefings were delivered by officers of the Office since the last report to the General Assembly.

2. Exhibitions and human rights observances

29. Since the last report to the General Assembly, OHCHR organized six exhibits. From 2 to 30 November 1999, in cooperation with the Literargymnasium Rämibühl, the exhibit "The Family of Man" was displayed in the Palais Wilson. From 7 to 31 December 1999, 30 lithographs donated by His Royal Majesty King Juan Carlos II of Spain to the United Nations and depicting the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were displayed in the Palais Wilson. In the second half of April 2000 OHCHR hosted, in collaboration with Médecins sans Frontières, the exhibit "The Wounds of Silence", by Nyamirambo Point d'Appui. An exhibit dedicated to the International Day for the Victims of Torture (26 June 2000) was displayed at the Palais Wilson from 22 June to 7 July. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, OHCHR hosted an exhibit by the International Movement ATD Fourth World consisting of seven sculptures which were displayed in the Palais Wilson courtyard from 20 November 1999 to 20 November 2000. An eighth sculpture, consisting of about 5,000 stones sent from children from all over the world, is now on permanent display at the Palais Wilson.

30. Since the last report to the General Assembly, OHCHR participated in the commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October 1999 in the Palais des Nations. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 20 November 1999, OHCHR, in collaboration with the International Movement ATD Fourth World, hosted the "International Children's Forum Tapori: Friendship Triumphs over Poverty". More than 100 children living in poverty from all over the world met with the High Commissioner to state their needs. On 10 December 1999, Human Rights Day, a round table on the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, was held in the Palais Wilson with the participation of the High Commissioner, the then President of the Swiss Confederation, Ruth Dreifuss, and the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Vladimir Petrovsky. On that occasion the High Commissioner also named seven Goodwill Ambassadors for the World Conference against Racism: Tahar Ben Jelloun, Ruben Blades, Vigdis Finnbogadottir, Seamus Heaney, Ravi Shankar, Wole Soyinka and Marian Wright Edelman.

3. Fellowship programme

31. The human rights fellowship programme (established through General Assembly resolution 926 (X) of 14 December 1955) is financed under the OHCHR regular budget for advisory services. The objectives of the programme are to provide a thorough knowledge of the international system for the protection of human rights and specifically of the periodic reporting system established within the context of the major United Nations human rights instruments. OHCHR offers fellowships to governmental and non-governmental officials and representatives.

32. In 2000, the programme was carried out from 3 to 14 April 2000 at the premises of the United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy. Thirty participants from 16 countries attended the training programme: Albania, Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syrian Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Yemen.

4. Internship programme

33. During the reporting period, OHCHR offered internships to 142 graduate students to enable them to gain first-hand knowledge of United Nations actions and procedures in the field of human rights.

34. Internships are awarded without financial commitment of any kind on the part of OHCHR or the United Nations bodies. The need for funding interns from developing countries is an important priority for the Office.

5. Training courses and other technical cooperation activities with a public information element

35. An account of the training courses, seminars and workshops organized by OHCHR is given in the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on Human Rights on technical cooperation in the field of human rights (E/CN.4/2001/104).

D. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

36. In its resolution 52/111 the General Assembly decided to convene a World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, of which the High Commissioner is Secretary-General.

37. OHCHR will publish, every two months, a newsletter entitled *United against Racism, Durban 2001*. The first issue will appear in December 2000. The newsletter will report on the preparations for the World Conference. It will be published in English and French.

38. OHCHR, in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Public Information, has distributed flyers and brochures on the World Conference at the regional expert seminars held in Warsaw, Bangkok, Addis Ababa and Santiago de Chile, as well as at the various regional preparatory meetings. A poster for the World Conference, designed by the renowned French artist Tomi Ungerer, is in preparation.

39. The High Commissioner has proclaimed a number of international meetings as satellite meetings to the World Conference, including the Bellagio consultation on the World Conference, organized by the International Human Rights Law Group, in January 2000; the Conference on Discrimination and Tolerance organized by the Danish Centre for Human Rights in May 2000, and the "Beyond Racism" Conference, organized by the Southern Education Foundation, Inc. in South Africa May-June 2000.

40. On 23 October 2000 a special event at United Nations Headquarters brought together Goodwill Ambassadors of various United Nations agencies and organizations, including those for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Nobel prize winner for literature Seamus Heaney, one of the seven Goodwill Ambassadors for the World Conference, briefed his colleagues about the World Conference.

41. On 7 December 2000 a videoconference hosted by international media and the Spanish-speaking television networks will be held in Santiago de Chile with the participation of the High Commissioner.

II. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

42. The Department of Public Information (DPI) continued to initiate and coordinate activities within the framework of the World Public Information Campaign and the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004. This work is also being carried out within the framework of three other ongoing decades: the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, 1993-2003; the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, 1995-2004; and the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, 1997-2006.

43. The Department carries out mandated programmes in such related areas as social, cultural and economic rights, the rights of specific groups, and other major issues such as the question of Palestine, decolonization, the advancement of women and the International Criminal Court.

44. The Department's effective coverage of United Nations human rights activities, as well as worldwide distribution of relevant human rights information materials, is ensured through a multimedia approach, which includes the production of printed materials regarding United Nations work in the field of human rights; making material available on the Internet on the United Nations Web site, through radio and television programmes, press conferences, press briefings and special events; exhibits; special media outreach activities and activities with educational organizations and non-governmental organizations; and public services for visitors and people with queries. These information materials are produced in the six United Nations languages and redisseminated, mainly through the network of 67 United Nations information centres and services and the eight United Nations Offices throughout the world.

45. During the period September 1999 to November 2000, the Department actively pursued its information campaign on human rights issues and because of the great demand for publications, the Department printed or reprinted and disseminated such documents worldwide. The Department also produced print materials to raise awareness of related issues, including women's rights. These print materials, as well as DPI press releases on United Nations meetings and documents, were distributed electronically to the network of information centres and services in addition to being posted on the United Nations Web site on the Internet. During the reporting period, some 300 DPI press releases on human rights issues were produced and distributed in English and French. All these press releases were also posted on the United Nations home page which, as of November 2000, averaged 2.5 million hits per day.

46. On the occasion of the European Regional Preparatory meeting for the World Conference against Racism, held in Strasbourg, France from 11 to 13 October 2000, an Op-Ed page on racism in Europe was written and placed in newspapers by DPI for the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference against Racism.

47. The *Yearbook of the United Nations*, published each year by the Department, devotes a separate three-chapter section to human rights questions in each volume. The work of the

Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights is covered in depth, as is related action by the United Nations Secretary-General, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Reports by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, special rapporteurs, independent experts and special representatives are summarized and linked to legislative action. In that context, the *Yearbook* describes activities carried out by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Public Information under the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights. The Department also covered the issue of human rights widely in its general institutional publications. Through the United Nations News Service on the Web (www.un.org/News) and its print version, the Daily Highlights, the Department provided regular coverage of human-rights related stories, including the work of the United Nations human rights bodies as well as the activities of and statements by the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

48. The DPI publication, *Africa Recovery*, published about 25 articles pertaining to human rights in Africa.

49. The DPI publication, *UN Chronicle*, featured a number of articles devoted to human rights, including its regular "Rightswatch" section. Among them, in Issue 3, 1999, it featured an article by Hilde Johnson, Minister for International Development and Human Rights of Norway, about the link between international development and respect for human rights. In Issue 2, 2000, in an article entitled "Internalizing human rights in corporate business practices", the High Commissioner reported that the results of the "Millennium Survey", the world's largest-ever public opinion poll, which are featured in the Secretary-General's Millennium Report, show that the protection of human rights is the primary assignment of the United Nations. The centre pages, "Towards a tapestry of trust", list the nine principles that the Global Compact challenges business leaders to promote and apply, including two which the Secretary-General especially asked them to support concerning protection of human rights and prevention of human rights abuses. Also included is an article by J. Quinn Martin entitled: "Can international human rights activism be reconciled with agendas of national interest?". Issue 3, 2000 carried the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which has a section on "Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance", in its entirety.

50. Dissemination of human rights publications has been enhanced through the promotional activities of the Sales and Marketing Section of DPI. Publications have been featured in exhibits at professional conferences, in advertisements in journals such as the *Human Rights Quarterly* and included in catalogues and other brochures. As new publications are released they are also featured on the United Nations Publications Web site and posted as listings with commercial Internet sites, such as Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com. In addition, the United Nations Bookshop maintains a large section devoted to human rights issues where it promotes titles of both United Nations and other commercial and non-profit publishers.

51. In connection with the redesign of the United Nations Web site, the Human Rights site is directly accessible from the main pages in most of the official languages. From the main Web page, under the rubric "Issues on the UN Agenda", the Human rights section contains key documents, United Nations system calendar of events, statements on human rights by the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General, links to the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, information on

partnerships with NGOs on human rights, as well as a photo collection depicting 50 years of United Nations human rights activities. The United Nations CyberSchoolBus - the online site for young people and educators - has made available student briefing papers on various topics including human rights. There is a special section on "Human Rights in Action" which contains the Universal Declaration, including the complete text as well as a "plain language" version and a question and answer section. The Russian version of the page contains a special resource page, "Human Rights at School". A new Web site for the World Conference against Racism has been created in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

52. UNTV and UNPHOTO activities relating to human rights included regular coverage of statements before the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. UNTV also produced and distributed worldwide the Secretary-General's statement on Human Rights Day and a video message by the High Commissioner was also distributed worldwide. UNTV and UNPHOTO also provided coverage for press conferences, including those by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as special events such as on 24 October 2000 when civil and human rights activists presented "A call to action to the United Nations" to the High Commissioner. A feature documentary was produced and distributed worldwide entitled: "Human Rights in Haiti: A Work-In-Progress".

53. "World Chronicle" TV programmes produced three programmes on the issue of human rights, including two interviews with the High Commissioner and one with the Director of the New York Office of OHCHR. The UNTV series in five languages, "UN in Action", which is distributed to broadcasters in more than 100 countries and is shown on the weekly programme "CNN World Report", produced human rights stories focusing on issues.

54. United Nations Radio covered extensively all aspects of human rights and related issues, including the forthcoming World Conference against Racism in its daily live broadcasts, news bulletins and weekly regional programmes. Since the launch of United Nations Radio's live daily radio broadcasts in the six languages in August 2000, they are all posted with other radio programmes on the World Wide Web and are available at http://www.un.org/av/radio. In addition, United Nations Radio produced more than 50 feature programmes exclusively devoted to the question of human rights, including the World Conference, in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, Bangla, Dutch, Hindi, Indonesian, French-Creole, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Turkish and Urdu.

55. Activities were organized by the Department at Headquarters and the United Nations information centres and services around United Nations special events including International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June), International Day of the World's Indigenous People (9 August), International Women's Day (8 March), International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), International Day of Tolerance (16 November) and Human Rights Day (10 December).

56. For the observance of Human Rights Day 1999 at Geneva, the Department, with the collaboration of the OHCHR, organized a two-day programme on human rights for 14 editors

from media organizations in developing countries. The editors also attended a special ceremony to announce the appointment of the seven Goodwill Ambassadors for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

57. In New York, DPI provided media outreach, prepared press materials and arranged press conferences for the Human Rights Day 1999 observance focusing on the signing ceremony, organized by DPI and the Division for the Advancement of Women, for the new Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Secretary-General subsequently opened a special panel discussion on the Optional Protocol. A special Web page was created for the occasion. Human Rights Day special events in New York began with a press conference given by Goodwill Ambassador Ruben Blades. As part of the observance, the World Conference was highlighted as South African performers from the Broadway show "Kat and the Kings" discussed their experiences growing up under apartheid with students attending the annual Student Conference on Human Rights.

58. A series of events took place at Headquarters on 3 April 2000, starting with an exhibit entitled "Visas for life: the righteous diplomats" which honoured more than 80 diplomats who risked their lives and livelihoods to rescue Jews and other refugees during the Holocaust, 1938-1945. One of the four still living - Jan Karski, former Consul General of Poland - attended the programme, which consisted of a press conference, a screening of the film "Sugihara: Conspiracy of Kindness", the opening of the exhibit and a convocation in the General Assembly Hall. Gillian Sorensen, Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations, delivered a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General and Bacre Waly Ndiaye, Director of the New York Office of OHCHR, delivered a statement on behalf of the High Commissioner. Speakers included Nane Annan, wife of the Secretary-General whose uncle, the late Raoul Wallenberg of Sweden, was among the diplomats being honoured by the exhibit, as well as other diplomats and officials.

59. For the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, indigenous people from around the world gathered at Headquarters on 9 and 10 August 2000 to participate in special events. On 9 August, messages from the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner were read and a sacred pipe ceremony was conducted by Arvol Looking Horse, the nineteenth generation "Keeper of the Sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe" of the Lakota people. This was followed by a dialogue on indigenous children and youth. On 10 August, indigenous representatives took part in preparatory consultations for the World Conference.

60. During the reporting period, the DPI non-governmental organizations briefing programme included six briefings dealing with human rights issues. In December 1999, the Department organized a briefing that focused on preparations for the World Conference. The briefing, which included presentations by United Nations and government representatives and civil society experts, was entitled: "The 21st century - an era of human rights: the fight against racism".

61. Human rights issues were also highlighted by speakers in presentations in two of the plenary panels during the fifty-third annual DPI/NGO conference (28-30 August 2000). In addition, during the conference, NGOs associated with the Department organized five workshops

on human rights questions, including human rights and sustainable development; women, peace, and security; violence against women; the protection of children; and human rights as a foundation for global solidarity.

62. Two special briefings related to human rights were organized for the guides conducting guided tours during the reporting period: one on women and the special session of the General Assembly in July 2000 and one by Olara Otunnu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in November 2000 on children and armed conflict. Human rights is one of the major issues addressed in the course of the guided tour. During the reporting period, 496,377 visitors took the tour. The Department organized 21 briefings for groups visiting Headquarters with close to 2,000 participants, and arranged for United Nations officials to speak to groups away from Headquarters on the topic of human rights.

63. Since 1998, DPI has been organizing an annual day-long conference on human rights for students (grades K-12) and teachers in association with an international coalition of NGOs. The 1999 Student Conference, held on 10 December, brought together over 400 students and 200 teachers and parents from the United States of America, Mexico and Canada. The Department has also arranged an annual teachers' meeting at Headquarters. On 17 January 1999, the focus was on human rights as over 450 teachers, mainly from the New York public school system, discussed practical ways to teach human rights at the primary and middle-school levels. In addition, six smaller workshops with middle and high school teachers were arranged during the reporting period, each with a main focus on human rights. The question of human rights is discussed in several publications for children. Two of them, "Discovering the UN" (DPI/2006) and "Everything you always wanted to know about the United Nations" (DPI/1888) include chapters on human rights and offer classroom exercises for students and teachers. A new publication posted on the United Nations Web site, "Briefing papers for students" (DPI/2161), includes chapters on human rights, children's rights, the girl child and child labour. During the reporting period, it responded to over 1,200 inquiries on various aspects of human rights, including racism, women's and children's rights and the rights of refugees.

A. Activities of the United Nations Information Service Geneva at the United Nations Office at Geneva

64. The United Nations Information Service (UNIS) Geneva at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) bears a special responsibility for promoting human rights, given its close involvement in the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the majority of the sessions of the six human rights treaty bodies. The Service continues to provide on a sustained basis in-depth support for all aspects of the human rights programme. This includes issuing press releases on human rights matters and, in particular, providing English- and French-language press coverage of their meetings; providing radio and television coverage of the above-mentioned bodies; holding regular briefings by the UNIS Director and the Media and Information Officer of OHCHR for the Geneva-based press; organizing briefings for NGOs, university students and the public.

65. From September 1999 to November 2000 the department disseminated 1,115 press releases, in English and French, on human rights issues as follows: 91 on the High Commissioner for Human Rights; 138 on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; 146 on the Commission on Human Rights; 60 on the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; 136 on the Human Rights Committee; 176 on the Committee on the Rights of the Child; 94 on the Committee against Torture; 138 on the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; and 136 on the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

66. In addition, the Service reissued press releases produced at Headquarters relating to human rights, including statements by the Secretary-General. Press releases were distributed in hard copy (155,650 copies) to the 251 correspondents of the UNOG press corps, permanent missions and NGOs, transmitted by cc-mail to DPI New York and immediately posted on the United Nations Web site.

67. UNIS maintained its own home page in English and French, which gave prominence to human rights developments. UNIS continued its collaboration with the Internet team of OHCHR to ensure that press releases on human rights activities were available with links to the OHCHR site. This proved invaluable to journalists, students, Governments, NGOs, etc.

68. During the reporting period, 28 press conferences were held on human rights issues, of which four were given by the High Commissioner. Most of the press conferences were given by special rapporteurs or other experts on human rights issues during the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

69. UNIS arranged for television and radio coverage of the Commission, the Subcommission and the special sessions of the Commission on East Timor and on Palestine, as well as of the various human rights treaty bodies and numerous press conferences. Audio, editing and transmission facilities were made available to radio journalists, and 151 radio coverage and news reports were sent to United Nations Radio New York for use in Headquarters programmes; 89 television outputs from UNTV coverage were distributed through the European Broadcasting Union to television stations throughout the world. UNIS also recorded video messages by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, liaised with visiting television crews and provided editing and satellite transmission services.

70. During the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and the fifty-second session of the Subcommission, UNIS organized 38 briefings for representatives of NGOs given by special rapporteurs and experts. UNIS also organized six briefings for representatives of NGOs given by human rights experts on the occasion of special events such as the special session of the General Assembly on social development. UNIS arranged and held seminars for four NGOs (approximately 111 persons). During each session, a presentation was organized with staff members of OHCHR to introduce the work of the High Commissioner on Human Rights.

71. On 19 November 1999, UNOG celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNIS welcomed a delegation of 100 children from all over the world who had come to Geneva to participate in the Children's Forum organized by the NGO International Movement ATD Fourth World. UNIS also organized a guided tour of the Palais des Nations for

the children and the representative of UNICEF distributed presents to them. On 20 November, the children were received by the High Commissioner at the Palais Wilson. UNIS was in charge of organizing the ceremony and the guided tour. UNIS also took charge of the logistics concerning the Children's Forum.

72. Every guided tour offers a presentation on human rights lasting six to eight minutes. Guides highlight the importance given to civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; the right to development and poverty eradication; the work of the treaty bodies in monitoring States' compliance with their obligations; the sensitive field work conducted by the special rapporteurs; the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in peacekeeping operations and promoting democracy, including human rights education; current priorities, such as the fight against trafficking in human beings and the forthcoming World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

73. Each year, within the Graduate Study Programme, a working group on human rights is constituted to study the various components of human rights within the theme of the current Programme. In 2000 the GSP Working Group on Human Rights examined some of the challenges that the United Nations may face in the prevention and protection of human rights in the new millennium, and made some strong recommendations in terms of prevention strategies.

74. UNIS organized 35 information programmes for groups (approximately 1,096 participants) from universities or other academic institutions in Europe and the United States of America. These groups specifically requested that a presentation be made by a staff member of OHCHR.

75. On 3 April 2000, a Model United Nations Millennium Summit was held in London. UNIS was instrumental in ensuring that students from Switzerland participated in this event. Particular emphasis was placed during the discussions on the human right to be free from hunger, violence and oppression as well as on tolerance of people's economic and cultural rights.

76. To celebrate United Nations Day, on 24 October 2000, a 1 hour 15 minute videoconference was held with the Worldlink 2000 Global Student Summit in Miami, Florida, United States of America, during which a six-minute video was shown on the activities of the UNOG and the specialized agencies at Geneva. A clip focusing on all the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was included. The majority of the questions put by the students in the ensuing question and answer session related to the actual impact of the article on children's rights in their country. A local class of schoolchildren was invited as observers.

77. UNIS participated as guest of honour in the Swiss exhibition Sion 2000. Among the documentation and materials prepared for this event, UNIS drafted the text for theme panels on various subjects, one of which being human rights. These theme panels were also reproduced on bookmarks and distributed to the public. More than 50,000 people visited the United Nations stand.

78. During the reporting period, UNIS successfully continued its information programme for information centres on the work of the treaty bodies when they meet at Geneva. The Service sent reports on the countries concerned, background press releases and the concluding

observations adopted at the sessions. In return, UNICs were requested to send opinion-oriented articles on the human rights debate, statements on government practices, etc. The reports and, when necessary, analyses of them were submitted to OHCHR, which then evaluated the impact of its human rights programme on the international media, or responded to any misconceptions.

79. UNIS, together with the Development and Human Rights Section of DPI, produced a 1999/2000 calendar of the sessions of the six human rights treaty bodies meeting in New York and Geneva. It also enumerated the country situations to be discussed with a view to alerting in advance the worldwide network of UNICs. The calendar was subsequently distributed to all UNICs and UNISs by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information.

80. UNIS, in collaboration with OHCHR, issued a publication entitled *Human Rights and Older Persons* with a foreword by the High Commissioner. This contained information on the relevant economic, social and cultural rights of older persons, and incorporated principle United Nations documents on ageing. Over 2,000 copies were distributed to the public. UNIS also prepared a poster to advertise the International Day of Older Persons (1 October) and produced T-shirts with the logo of the Day for sale to the public.

81. During the special session of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation in Palestine, UNIS produced press releases, providing English- and French-language press coverage of the meeting; provided radio and television coverage; held regular briefings for the Geneva-based press by the OHCHR Media and Information Officer.

82. UNIS continued to take the lead in organizing commemorations at the Palais des Nations of international days, namely: International Day of Older Persons (1 October); International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October); International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March); International Day of the World's Indigenous People (9 August).

83. The OHCHR Media and Information Officer held daily press briefings during the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and prepared daily press reviews on the Commission and broader human rights issues, as well as a note to the media. These provided a clear overview of the agenda and its highlights. UNIS also ensured the availability of draft resolutions in the press room; apprised the Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General of daily developments; arranged press conferences by special rapporteurs and experts for the international broadcast media; and gave interviews to the media on issues raised at the Commission.

B. Activities of other United Nations information centres and services and United Nations Offices

84. More than 38 United Nations information centres (UNIC) and services and United Nations Offices (UNO) commemorated Human Rights Day on or around 10 December 1999. Working in cooperation with Governments, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, businesses and other members of civil society, the centres organized various special events: seminars, lectures, media round tables, training programmes, video/film screenings, press conferences, conferences, workshops, panel discussions and exhibits. A few activities selected from among all those undertaken by the centres were the following: UNIC Asunción organized an exhibit of works by several nationally

renowned artists on the theme "Human rights and older persons" at the National Museum; photo or art exhibits were organized in Lisbon, Maseru, Sydney, Yerevan and in Ostrava, Czech Republic, organized by UNIC Prague; training programmes for journalists were organized by the UNICs in Beirut and Bucharest and a round table was organized in Moscow; panel discussions with government representatives, NGOs and teachers were held at the UNICs Accra, Antananarivo, Tbilisi, Vienna and Dhaka, where a launch of a book of poetry on human rights was also organized; UNO Tashkent organized a special event for children with games and a concert; more than 10 centres organized lectures and film screenings for students; UNIC Mexico organized a special event highlighted by a jazz concert. Information centres also published various information materials to help promote the observance of the Day, such as a CD-Rom on the United Nations and human rights in Copenhagen; a poster for Human Rights Day and a book with a new compilation of major human rights instruments in Russian in Minsk; a poster/book on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for children in Yerevan; cassettes for the blind with the Universal Declaration in Spanish and Guarani in Asunción; and many press releases and articles. UNIC directors and information officers gave numerous interviews for radio, television and the print media on the occasion of the Day; they also lectured at universities in Moscow, New Delhi and Tehran and spoke to various audiences at special events organized with Governments, local authorities and NGOs. Public service announcements were prepared and/or translated to local languages and aired on national television networks in Harare and Minsk; UNO Almaty participated in the production of a TV programme on human rights; UNIC Ouagadougou produced a half-hour TV special for the Day and UNIC Port of Spain produced a live two hour special that was broadcast to all the countries in the Caribbean.

85. Press conferences were organized and radio programmes and press releases produced for the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture by centres in Beirut, Lisbon, Minsk and Panama and UNIC Prague organized a workshop. Assistance was provided and press conferences organized for the visiting Special Rapporteur on torture in Baku and Nairobi.

86. The International Day of the World's Indigenous People was marked by special events such as a panel discussion in Brazzaville, an information fair in Bucharest, press conferences in Nairobi and Harare which were broadcast on national TV, and a film screening in Rome. Officials in several centres were interviewed on national media on the occasion of the Day.

87. The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was also commemorated by several centres: a panel discussion was held in Brazzaville; a workshop in the Netherlands was organized by UNIC Brussels; a week-long seminar for NGOs was held in Copenhagen; a lecture for students was given in Moscow; public service announcements were produced in Prague and aired on television 15 times; articles were written for newspapers and UNIC officials were interviewed for radio and the print media.

88. Similar activities were undertaken for the International Day for Tolerance, including a media round table in Moscow, a lecture in Baku and a seminar in New Delhi, as well as for the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression (4 June).

89. Other events and programmes include two competitions for students in Asunción, one of them a competition of designs on children's rights held in cooperation with the national postal service, with the winning designs printed on stamps; a global ecumenical special

event, "72 hours of world peace", co-organized by UNIC Buenos Aires; an exhibition of drawings by children from Arab States in Tunis and training for staff of the newly created Tunisian Ministry for Human Rights by the Director of UNIC Tunis; an essay contest on human rights for students in Prague; and the organization of the "Human Rights Games" by UNIC Rio de Janeiro - a sports event for the youth in Rio featuring educational games and activities teaching children basic human rights.

90. Human rights instruments have been translated, printed, or reprinted by several UNICs, such as UNICs Lagos and Ankara which translated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into local languages; Brussels, which reprinted the Universal Declaration in Dutch; Yangon, which reprinted the Universal Declaration in Myanmar; Colombo, which reprinted the International Bill of Human Rights in Sinhala; Dhaka, which translated into Bangla and printed the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

91. The tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was marked by special events and press briefings in Accra, where the Convention has been translated into six local languages; Athens, where the UNIC organized an exhibition of children's drawings, Baku, where the UNO arranged for the broadcast of a press conference throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States; Brussels, Tashkent, Warsaw and Yerevan.

92. The upcoming World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has been publicized by many information centres in connection with Human Rights Day or the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Among other events organized were: a workshop on racism in Belgium, organized by UNIC Brussels; an NGO meeting on the Conference and the International Day in Copenhagen; a briefing for students on racism and the Conference in Ouagadougou; production of a video message on the Conference by President Havel for Human Rights Day in Prague; a special issue of the UNIC newsletter on the Conference in Rabat. DPI information materials prepared for the Conference have been translated and produced in local languages by several centres.

93. Information centres provided assistance and logistical support and generated publicity for visiting United Nations officials including several special rapporteurs and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In Brussels, Madrid, Mexico City, Moscow and Washington, press conferences, radio, television and newspaper interviews and other meetings were organized for the High Commissioner. Interviews with the High Commissioner were also facilitated for the media in Prague, Rome and Santa Fé de Bogotá.

94. In addition, the United Nations Secretary General's Op-Ed, "We the Peoples: the UN and Human Rights in the 21st Century", was translated and placed in about 50 major media outlets in over 20 countries. The High Commissioner's messages and an Op-Ed piece on the World Conference entitled "Fighting racism: enough talk, time for action" were placed in major newspapers in several countries in the spring of 2000.